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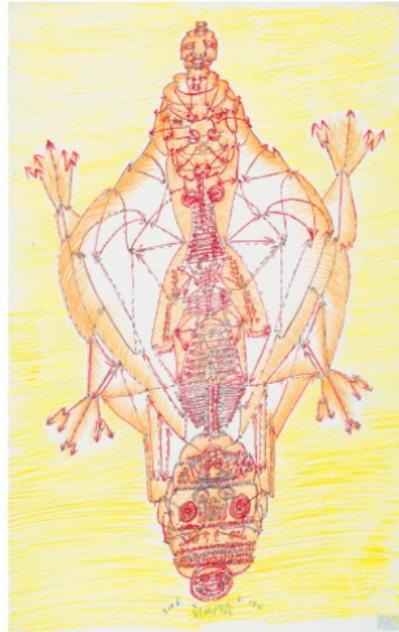
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Exhibition



Guo Fengyi, "Organization Method of Human Numeric," ink on blueprint paper, 55" x 34", 2006. Courtesy of Long March Space.

Guo Fengyi exhibition: 'To See from a Distance'

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**Thursday, Aug. 20-
Sunday, Nov. 29**
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The **SCAD Museum of Art** (<http://www.scadmoa.org>) is pleased to present *Guo Fengyi: To See from a Distance*, the first major institutional exhibition of the artist's work in the U.S. Born in 1942 in Xi'an, the site of China's historical capital, Guo began making art in her late forties after debilitating arthritis forced her into early retirement from a job at a chemical fertilizer factory. To alleviate her chronic pain, Guo devoted herself to qi gong — an ancient Chinese wellness and healing technique that combines coordinated movements, breathing, and meditation — and subsequently developed a highly personal drawing practice. Producing an astonishing body of work in the last two decades of her life, Guo created more than 500 intricate ink drawings on subjects ranging from cosmology and Chinese mythology to traditional Chinese medicine and philosophy.

The exhibition features more than 30 works from Guo's brief yet prolific career, including drawings executed on the backs of book and calendar pages and on cloth, as well as small- and large-scale drawings on rice-paper scrolls. *To See from a Distance* provides an overview of Guo's visionary drawings, which incorporate the diagrammatic, the mystical, and the wildly imaginative.

Guo understood qi gong as a science through which she could analyze and heal her own body and those of others. She kept a journal in which she recorded her activities, including the dates and times of her self-healing sessions, as well as detailed written descriptions of how her body, mind, and spirit moved together as she practiced. Guo soon began to see images, colors, and shapes during her qi gong meditations and quickly shifted from writing detailed descriptions of her bodily responses to filling the pages of her journals with drawings of mythological creatures, complex anatomical systems, and ornately dressed humanoids.

Qi gong allowed Guo, who did not have an academic art background, to develop a deeply personal and symbolically charged visual language. Her early journal writings reveal that the visions she experienced became so powerful that she could not prevent herself from depicting them. Drawing appeared quite naturally to Guo as a mode of inquiry, and she drew to interrogate the meaning of what she saw — as if, she wrote, "from a distance."



Guo drew what she envisioned, including sites and subjects that she could not physically visit or that she did not know about. Many of her earliest drawings — including *Diagram of the Human Nervous System* (1989) and *The Diagram of the Liver Meridian* (1990) — carefully map anatomical systems that the artist intuited rather than actually saw. Other drawings, such as *Huangdi Mausoleum* (1996), reference ancient Chinese history, depicting the contents of the sealed burial chambers of China's earliest emperors. By the mid-1990s, Guo had abandoned her journals, switching to paper scrolls. Taking advantage of their length and verticality, she created compositions dominated by expansive lines drawn with sweeping, controlled gestures. Over the last decade of her career, she amassed more than 70 drawings made on the backs of old calendars and on rice-paper scrolls that measure up to six meters long.

Together, Guo's works speak to the power of drawing as a means to comprehend and “see” the unknown. Deeply rooted in the understanding of the relationship between the human body and the universe that has persisted for millennia throughout Chinese culture, Guo's drawings incorporate both the micro- and the macroscopic, revealing universes both internal and external.

About the artist

Guo Fengyi began exhibiting her work in the mid-2000s and continued to do so until her death in 2010 at age 66. Solo exhibitions of her work have been presented by Gladstone Gallery, Brussels, Belgium; Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York; Long March Space, Beijing; Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada; Collection de L'Art Brut, Lausanne, Switzerland; and Galerie Christian Berst, Paris. Over the past several years, her work has been included in group exhibitions at OCAT Xi'an, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China; Borderless Art Museum No-Ma, Shigaken, Japan; Kunsthall Rotterdam, The Netherlands; The Hayward Gallery, London; the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, California; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; The Museum of Everything, London; and Kunsthaus Graz, Austria, among others. Guo's drawings were included in the Gwangju Biennale, China (2010); the 55th Venice Biennale, Italy (2013); and the 57th Carnegie International, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (2013).

Guo Fengyi: To See from a Distance is co-produced by The Drawing Center, New York, and the SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah. The exhibition is curated by Rosario Güiraldes, assistant curator, and Laura Hoptman, executive director, The Drawing Center, and organized at the SCAD Museum of Art by Rosario Güiraldes and Humberto Moro, adjunct curator.



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